

Lower Paxton Township
PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

December 04, 2013

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Fredrick Lighty
Ernest Gingrich
Roy Newsome
Dennis Guise
Douglas Grove
Robin Lindsey
Richard Beverly

ALSO PRESENT

Dianne Moran, Planning & Zoning Officer
Stephen Fleming, Township Engineer, HRG. Inc.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Lighty called the regular meeting of the Lower Paxton Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 pm on the above date in Room 171 of the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

The Commissioners led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Lighty tabled the November 6, 2013 minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

Special Exception Request for Bishop McDevitt High School Overflow Parking SE-13-01

Ms. Moran stated that The Diocese of Harrisburg has submitted an application for a

Special Exception to expand the existing parking facilities with additional unpaved parking at the Bishop McDevitt High School. The proposed parking area is located along the west side of the new stadium on the existing athletic practice fields. Staff noted that the Land Development Plan was approved showing additional location for parking.

Mr. John DiSanto was present this plan.

Mrs. Lindsey asked if Central Dauphin High School ever had to apply for a Special Exception because they park on the soccer field, tennis court and also in front of the school where they back out into traffic?

Mr. DiSanto said, he did not think so. Mrs. Lindsey asked so they are permitted to do that? Mr. DiSanto answered yes.

Mr. DiSanto stated that the driving factor for the Special Exceptions is concerning the traffic at the school, primarily at the first two games. I was at the first game which was against Harrisburg, it was a big game, plus the entire Bishop McDevitt community was out there, and the field was blessed. There was a real problem with parking and people were parking in some of the adjacent fields along Page Road.

Mr. DiSanto stated that they had a meeting with Lower Paxton Township, Swatara Township, and EMS, and decided it would be to everyone's interest if we stayed with our original Special Exception to approve parking on the additional fields that are available. Mr. DiSanto referenced exhibit C in their packet which shows the layout of where they would like to park additional cars when needed, on the baseball field and the soccer practice field and it would only be when needed. We really did not get a count on the first game and, after the second game, which was also a big game, it was against Central Dauphin, traffic was not as bad as the first game. We developed a Special Event parking plan. Field # 4 is the approved parking from the original Special Exception which is the practice football field where we put in stone where we can park the cars. It is really driven only in special needs and I don't think we will need it more than one or two times a year. The Township asked us to come in and do a Special Exception to park on the grass.

Mr. Lighty stated that he would like to begin with 2009 when we were here to approve the Land Development Plan. At that time, you stated that there would be parking in various locations. Mr. DiSanto said, yes, and parking on the south side of Spring Creek Road. Mr. Lighty stated that they reviewed the minutes from 2009 and you promised that the parking for football games would be more than enough using the Land Development Plan. Mr. Lighty stated now your proposing something else. Can you give us an overview of why we should reconcile with what you are proposing today.

Mr. DiSanto says that it is important to note that our approved plans show that additional fields and parking, that is all it says on the southside of Spring Creek Road. There was no design, there are no permits, no E&S or anything. That was never part of the approval of the original project. That is just ground the Diocese has and is noted for future potential expansion.

Mr. Lighty stated that since future parking was noted on the southside, it gave us the impression back in 2009 that, if there were a lot of vehicles showing up for the game, that is where parking would be available. You are not proposing to open or review that you are proposing something else tonight. Mr. DiSanto said he never presented that parking being available.. I doubt if anything will ever be built there, which leads to the second point, the Diocese has exhausted the budget for the project. There is nothing that can be built there, there is no budget.

Mrs. Lindsey asks if they are still parking at Chatham Glenn? Mr. DiSanto stated that, as far as he knows, there is no offsite parking. The plan was established to address overflow parking during occasional events that overseat capacity and this plan was developed with the impact of the Lower Paxton Township Police. The police are retained to direct traffic and paid for by the school. Local Fire Police are also retained and paid for by the school to direct traffic. Bishop McDevitt has volunteers that have been trained and equipped to direct traffic. At the conclusion of the games, both gates on the eastern end of the property are opened so people can get to Crusader Way, headed out to the east not to the west, not out on Spring Creek Road.

It was questioned how, with all the traffic, emergency vehicles would emerge, or would they be blocked out of site. The Township have put the gates in with an opticom entry system, so that the Township could

come onto the site at any time. The Township will always be able to access the road from the west by the other two gates even if Crusader Way and Page Road. is blocked off. If the Township comes from the west, Dowhower Road, they can come up Spring Creek Road. and there is an automatic opticom system. Mr. Lighty asked if the average number of people per football game is five thousand people, this Special Exception request, with seventeen hundred parking spaces, be enough? Mr. DiSanto answered that he believes that it will be more than enough, we have never used all the spaces. Possibly, we would have on the first game, if they had parked on the baseball fields and the soccer field, then we would have come close to filling those.

Mr. DiSanto stated there is plenty of capacity with this Special Exemption parking plan. Frankly, the school does not want to use the overflow parking because it has potential for damaging the fields, they only want to use the fields for last resort.

Mr. Lighty asked with what you have seen at the football games, will seven thousand parking spaces be enough for the five thousand people crowd? Do you have any traffic study counts? Mr. DiSanto stated that he has had a meeting with staff to see if doing a traffic study would prove anything. A traffic study will not bring the correct data needed. He is more than confident that the Special Exception plan will more than handle the eight thousand people.. The last five games there has been no parking out of the approved parking.

Mr. Lighty asked about the lighting situation at night and the cars having to park out at the fields. Mr. DiSanto stated that the lighting is limited but there are stadium lights and that makes it sufficient to walk out there without any real danger.

Mr. Newsome asks if they would notify the Township when they have to use the land to the south for overflow parking. He would like to know, on an ongoing basis, when these two areas are opened up for parking and let us monitor. That is not an unreasonable request. Mr. DiSanto stated that he has no problem with that request. They will only be open when they have to be. They will be happy to send a report after every game.

Mr. Guise made a motion to move the Special Exception for Bishop McDevitt parking #13-01, onto the Zoning Hearing Board. Mrs. Lindsey seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan for James and Mary Jane Spangler and Bethany Church of the Nazarene #13-15

Mr. Grove made a motion that the Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan for James and Mary Jane Spangler and Bethany Church of the Nazarene #13-15 be tabled, Mr. Newsome seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan for Robert L. Leo #13-07

Ms. Moran introduced the plan and the requested waivers.

Mr. Steve Naus was present to represent the Plan. They are going to withdraw waiver request. Mr. Lighty asked if there were any comments you wish to petition or add verification on? Mr. Naus comments on the sidewalk waiver in which Dianne spoke to is fine with accepting the addition and we knew with the future development. The recreation fee comment we were hoping to get something similar to the sidewalk plus the development and creating a fee. Mr. Lighty says they never defer the fee-in-lieu. Steve Fleming says it is appropriate to collect the fee-in-lieu at this time. Robert Leo says he has no problem with the trees street requirement and is willing to put in the trees. The parcel would be split because the Leos' would like separate real estate tax bills, sewer bills.

Mr. Guise made a motion to recommend approval of The Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan for Robert L. Leo #13-17. Mr. Grove seconded the motion and the motion was passed unanimously.

Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan for Benjamin Slotznick #13-19

Ms. Moran introduced the plan.

Mr. Jeff Staub was present to represent the Plan. The plan for Benjamin Slotzick is a pre-existing lots created with the plans of Colonial Park Farms. The problem with these pre-existing lots is that there is no actual road, they were created when there was a street at the existing lots. Three lots would be created so each lot would have an extension on the front instead of on at the side. Lots 168, 169, and 170 all have an extension of the side, that itself doesn't adhere to the Township Ordinance so we have to get a variance. Since the variance has been granted we have been in discussion with the Township on how to provide a physical access to the property. We have come up with a solution of a shared driveway that goes through the east of the driveway.

Mr. Lighty asked what is the vision for the shared driveway? Mr. Staub answered that Mr. Slotznick, at this time, has prepared a draft for the shared driveway. Commission members expressed concerns over issues that could arise from a shared driveway.

Mr. Light stated that maintenance may be an issue.

Mrs. Lindsey asked about the snow plowing and if the Township goes to the end of the street, will they be able to get off to the side of the road? Mr. Staub stated that that has to be looked at, an easement may be added.

Mr. Fleming stated that he would like to look at the layout of the extension and the situation created by the variance. He recommended that the Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan for Benjamin Slotznick #13-19 be tabled.

Mr. Newsome made a motion to table the Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan for Benjamin Slotznick #13-19. Mr. Beverly seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for Meadowview Village, Lot 1B

Ms. Moran stated that the applicant, after receiving the comments requested that the Plan to be tabled.

Mr. Staub was present to represent the plan. The plan was created in 1999, and at that time, the property was zoned R2. The problem is that the current zoning is now Institutional.

Mr. Fleming stated that the applicant can submit a new application and have a sketch for the plan of the existing development.

Mr. Staub stated that a walking path may be added instead of a sidewalk.

Mr. Newsome asked what kind of structure is planned, a two- story or a one- story? Mr. Staub answered that it has been considered a two- story.

Mr. Grove made a motion to table the Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for Meadowview Village, Lot 1B. Mrs. Lindsey seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously..

Next meeting January 8, 2014

The next Planning Commission meeting is January 8, 2014.

Adjournment

Mr. Grove made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned 8:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Michele Kwasnoski

Recording Secretary

